



**Creative heritage of A.K.
Tolstoy in interpretation
by F.E. Paktovsky**

CREATIVE HERITAGE OF A.K. TOLSTOY IN INTERPRETATION BY F.E. PAKTOVSKY

HERENCIA CREATIVA DE A.K. TOLSTOY EN LA INTERPRETACIÓN DE F.E. PAKTOVSKY

ABSTRACT

This article presents a conceptual analysis of F.E. Paktovsky, dedicated to the creative heritage of A.K. Tolstoy. The relevance of this study is determined by the importance of the figure of the literary critic for the history of Russian criticism of the 19th and 20th centuries, the importance of his views on the creativity of the authors of Russian classical literature of the second half of the 19th century, and also for the history of the National University of BelSU as a whole, since the critic was one of the directors of Belgorod teacher's institute. Turning to the works of A.K. Tolstoy, a literary critic considers them as the embodiment of aesthetic views on the nature of art, he focuses attention on socio-political motives that were relevant to contemporary Russian social life.

KEYWORDS: Belgorod Teacher's Institute, F.E. Paktovsky, A.K. Tolstoy, literary criticism, conceptual analysis, motivational-figurative method, biographical method, historical and literary.

Copyright © Revista San Gregorio 2018 eISSN: 2528-7907 ©

RESUMEN

Este artículo presenta un análisis conceptual de F.E. Paktovsky, dedicado a la herencia creativa de A.K. Tolstoy. La importancia de este estudio está determinada por la importancia de la figura del crítico literario para la historia de la crítica rusa de los siglos XIX y XX, la importancia de sus puntos de vista sobre la creatividad de los autores de la literatura clásica rusa de la segunda mitad de el siglo 19, y también para la historia de la Universidad Nacional de BelSU en su conjunto, ya que el crítico fue uno de los directores del instituto de profesores de Belgorod. Pasando a los trabajos de A.K. Tolstoy, un crítico literario los considera como la encarnación de puntos de vista estéticos sobre la naturaleza del arte, centra su atención en motivos sociopolíticos que fueron relevantes para la vida social rusa contemporánea.

PALABRAS CLAVE: Instituto de Profesores de Belgorod, F.E. Paktovsky, A.K. Tolstoi, crítica literaria, análisis conceptual, método motivacional-figurativo, método biográfico, histórico y literario.

Copyright © Revista San Gregorio 2018 eISSN: 2528-7907 ©



VALERIY A. CHERKASOV



Belgorod State National Research University,
Russian Federation



cherkasov@bsu.edu.ru



OLGA I. EREMENKO



Belgorod State National Research University,
Russian Federation



VERA V. DEMICHEVA



Belgorod State National Research University,
Russian Federation



TATYANA V. YAKOVLEVA



Belgorod State National Research University,
Russian Federation



SVELANA V. PETROVA



Belgorod State National Research University,
Russian Federation

ARTÍCULO RECIBIDO: 3 DE JUNIO DE 2018

ARTÍCULO ACEPTADO PARA PUBLICACIÓN: 25 DE JULIO DE 2018

ARTÍCULO PUBLICADO: 31 DE AGOSTO DE 2018

1. INTRODUCTION

This research was conceived within the framework of the project “Belgorod Teachers’ Institute: Directors, Teachers and Graduates”, fruitfully developed by the professor of the National Research University “BelGU” V.M. Moskovkin. In the introductory work on this topic Vladimir Mikhailovich indicates among other directors of the Belgorod Teachers’ Institute, whose scientific work requires a detailed study, the literary critic Fyodor Yegorovich Paktovsky (1856 / 1859-1922) [3, 38]. This scholar is known as the author of detailed works on the creativity by N.V. Gogol, A.K. Tolstoy, L.N. Tolstoy, V.G. Korolenko, V.M. Garshin and A.P. Chekhov [Voronova, L.Ja., 2013, 290-297, 359]. His essay about A.K. Tolstoy’s works is one of the first generalizing works on this topic. He was among the first researchers of Chekhov’s creativity [Moskovkin V.M., 2014, 38]. The fact that his treatise “Contemporary Society in the Works by A.P. Chekhov” (1901) is referred by modern scientific research confirms the significance of Chekhov’s studies by Paktovsky [Ershova, A.A., 2016.]. It is remarkable that a famous writer Gaito Gazdanov was among his students at the 2nd Kharkov gymnasium, where he served as a director [Orlova, O.M., 2005, 42].

A.K. Tolstoy’s creativity always attracted the attention of many scholars. The analysis of his works was demanded not only in Russia, but also abroad, as evidenced by the works written by N.S. Parsons [1980], E. Sheinberg [2010], M. Ritzarev [2010] and A. Szymańska [2011].

Due to the significance of F.E. Paktovsky’s personality for the history of Russian criticism at the turn of the XIX-XX centuries, the relevance of his views on the work of Russian literature classics of the second half of the XIXth century, as well as for the history of the National Research University “BelSU” as

a whole, we intend to carry out the conceptual analysis of his literary and critical heritage having considered the main motives of his literary and critical works. They are quite numerous and they are very voluminous. Therefore, this article is necessarily the first one (hopefully not the last) in the whole series of articles that we have conceived, devoted to the study of F.E. Paktovsky’s creativity.

2.METHODOLOGY

Motivational-figurative method, biographical method and historical and literary method.

3.MAIN PART.

Chronologically, the first of the literary and literary-critical works by F.E. Paktovsky was the essay “The count A.K. Tolstoy and his poetic work” (1900), written for the 25th anniversary of the poet’s death (Paktovsky, 1900). Let’s begin to analyze it.

F.E. Paktovsky explains the relatively modest celebration of the twenty-fifth anniversary of A.K. Tolstoy’s death. Tolstoy’s by the irrelevance of the ideological world of his works, “singing only the beautiful”, in the conditions of the “boiling social activity of the 60s [Paktovskij, F.E., 1900. .] of the nineteenth century”. However, the critic seeks to smooth out the emerging contradiction between the utilitarian direction of Russian social thought and the poet’s work, pointing to the timeless significance of the “eternal and general ideas of beauty and good” characteristic for the latter [5, 5]: “And if the poetry by count A. Tolstoy, while not directly concerned with the evil of the day, remained at the same time the exponent of the beautiful aspects of a man’s spirit life, therefore, was not defeated by modernity and had its right to coexist with the poetry of a different direction” [Paktovskij, F.E., 1900. ;Tolstoj, A.K., 1969.].

Characterizing the ideological world of Tolstoy’s poetry, F.E. Paktovsky emphasizes its nationality above all. This emphasis on the national content of Tolstoy’s poetry is in connection with the general aspiration of the critic to “justify” the poet in the eyes of utilitarian idea supporters about the tasks of Russian literature. As the examples of Tolstoy’s “folk” lyrics in the mentioned meaning of

this definition, Paktovsky quotes the poems published in the magazine "Sovremennik": "To love without reason ..." (1854), "Prudence" (1854), "Oh, I would like the Volga river ran back! .." (1856). At the same time, in these works he singles out "social" motives and images close to the understanding of the democratic public. Thus, the verse "If to argue, then boldly ..." is associated with the image of "the furious Vissarion" [5, 10]. Considering "Prudence" he points out the similarity of the Tolstoy's lyric hero position with the author's position by A.S. Griboyedov, who ridiculed "moderation and accuracy" as a world outlook. In "Oh, I would like the Volga river ran back!" the critic treats the poems "If petty officials can be ignored!", "If a hungry man dine every day!" in a utilitarian sense. It is curious that in Paktovsky's literary-critical discourse such socially-accusatory motives are organically combined with the monarchical motif. In the poems "If forgive, then wholeheartedly, / If a feast, then a great feast!" he sees a hint on the image of Peter I, thus placing him on a par with the aforementioned image of the "violent Vissarion," and the ironic ending of the poem "Oh, I would like the Volga river ran back! .." "straightens" in a very loyal way: "Let the father our king knew the whole truth" high puts him [Tolstoy - V.Ch.], as the noble zemstvo member of his country, in whose soul lives the sacred desire of people unity with the throne of their fatherland" [5, 11].

As you know, Tolstoy wrote a number of works with an acute rejection of the sixties. How does Paktovsky overcome this obstacle in his striving to reconcile the democratic public of the late nineteenth century with the "rejected" poet? He balances the positions of the opposing sides, pointing to their extremes. The followers of sixties, according to Paktovsky, wrongfully denied the art of general humanist orientation, except for the utilitarian one. "No matter how great the importance of art, which creates public thought, or awakens it, although its role is predominant in the history of our country," he writes, "nevertheless, its high and indisputable significance should not destroy the values of that art, which educates just a man, and not just a citizen of his time, for even a citizen must be a man first of all" [5, 19]. In this regard, Paktovsky recognizes the criticism of utilitarianism in art, expressed in Tolstoy's program poem "Against the Current" (1867).

However, according to the critic, Tolstoy was also not right, giving out in the poem "Pantelei-healer" (1866) and the poem "The Flow Bugatyr" (1871) the private shortcomings of the activity of the sixties for the essence of their teaching. Nevertheless, Paktovsky explains Tolstoy's pamphlet attacks against the trend of sixties by a mere misunderstanding, or, in his words, an "unwitting mistake" [5, 21], which can not undermine the belief in the purity of the poet's democratic beliefs. Here is the sample of the critic's reasoning on this topic: "Unbeknownst to himself, he has joined by these two poems to the unsympathetic camp of reform opponents, it was imperceptible for himself, because it is hard to believe that the poet's sympathies were on the side of an orderly clerk instead of a jury trial, or on the side of an empty secular life of a Russian girl instead of her aspirations for learning, to an active work in the same fields where a man works" [5, 20]. "These defects in A. Tolstoy's poetry should not and can not undermine his significance as an honest writer also because there are different mockeries. His mockery was not due to hatred of everything noble and honest, it was not the fear that the stilted authorities were crumbling and light would crush "those who walk in the darkness"; it was only a misunderstanding peculiar to people and, perhaps, it brought a certain amount of benefit to society, keeping it from further delights. If we add to this that the count A. Tolstoy has deviations of a completely different nature, it will be quite clear that A.K. Tolstoy was not opposed to the described phenomena by conviction "[5, 21]. Under "deviations of a completely different nature," Paktovsky probably meant acute attacks of the poet against the powers that he described in detail by the satire "The People Gathered at the Administration Gates ..." (1857).

The second part of Paktovsky's essay, devoted to the description of Tolstoy's epic and dramatic works, is based on the consideration of their ideological and imaginative level in itself, irrespective of the social problems of 1860-ies and 1870-ies. This attitude is motivated by the critic's conviction in the isolation of Tolstoy's interests as a historical novelist and a playwright of the pre-Petrine history of Russia: "... true to himself and his views on art, the count A. Tolstoy does not consider in the epic and dramatic works, his modern epoch and the epoch close to his time. His poetic field, or possession, is Russian life and

history before Peter the Great with its positive and negative phenomena" [5, 22]. According to Paktovsky, Tolstoy manifests himself as "a poet of pure, lofty ideals, which must be the foundation of social life above all" in prose and drama [5, 21]. In accordance with this setting, Paktovsky concentrates on the analysis of the structural, poetic features of Tolstoy's prosaic and dramatic works. In his view, history plays a subordinate role in the writer's work: he needs it only "to express his personal ideals" [5, 23]. Therefore, the critic divides the system of characters of Tolstoy's epic and dramatic works, which he considers as a single text, into two categories: "some are the living persons of history, appearing in the creation by virtue of truth demands, the fact itself, the bearers of their time ideas, the representatives of the "main topic of the day in history" and therefore the persons needed by the poet for his original artistic conception; others are his personal creations [...] peculiar psychological sketches, which embodied the cherished ideals of the poet, and bear only the external features of his original, his name and the general outline of historical portraits" [5, 24]. According to Paktovsky, the conflict of Tolstoy's works is based "on the struggle, on the clash between the representatives of the ideas of the "main topic of the day" in history and the representatives of pure eternal ideas by which the ideal creation of the poet are endowed" [5, 24]. Under the "main topic of the day," the critic means "state principles" [5, 25], for the sake of assertion of which the destinies of individuals were broken, their moral principle was destroyed. In Tolstoy's works, this despotic idea is realized by Ioann IV and Boris Godunov. They are compared and at the same time they are opposed to the heroes who, according to Paktovsky's formulation, "really show us all the highly moral, everything morally strong, powerful, strong in a person and at the same time shade the temporal and immoral in the enthusiasm or beliefs of the people who took upon themselves the work of time" [5, 25]. In his opinion, such people are the boyar Morozov, Prince Serebryany, Tsar Feodor Ioannovich, Queen Irina, Prince Repnin, the Prince Ivan Petrovich Shuisky and others [5, 25]. The critic believes that Tolstoy's ideal characters are a direct projection of his personality, so to speak, the resonators expressing his cherished beliefs and the dreams of a just society: "In the speech of his ideal characters, the poet encapsulates the entire power of his personal, but always calm feeling

and sympathies; he captures the attention of a reader and a viewer to the words and the actions of the actors so powerfully that he can not forget their noble images for a long time. This is the life force of A.K. Tolstoy's works" [5, 27].

4.SUMMARY.

Let's summarize our research. Of all the lyrics by Tolstoy, Paktovsky chooses to analyze the poems of socio-political orientation. The critic pays much less attention to the love and landscape poetry of the poet, confining to its general characteristic. Treating Tolstoy's epic and the drama as the realization of his aesthetic views on the nature of art, Paktovsky, nevertheless, accentuates the socio-political motives in them that are relevant to contemporary Russian social life. Even the notorious "ideals" in Tolstoy's works, which, according to his own admission, testify to the poet's adherence to "pure art", he considers in a utilitarian way as a good didactic tool for the upbringing of the younger generation. At the same time, the critic perceives Tolstoy's ideas and images in a biographical manner, as the direct projections of his personality, without taking into account their romantic conventionality.

5.CONCLUSIONS

1. In the interpretation by F.E. Paktovsky A.K. Tolstoy's works represent the realization of aesthetic views on the nature of art, the ideological and imaginative world is considered in the biographical aspect, the attention is focused on socio-political motives.

2. In the considered essay, F.E. Paktovsky appears as a representative of Russian utilitarian criticism of the late XIXth century, genetically ascending to the revolutionary-democratic traditions of the 1860-ies. 

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Voronova, L.Ja., 2013. Paktovskij F.E. Russian literature in the perception of the Kazan intelligentsia. Training. allowance: reader,

Kazan: KFU, 359-360 (in Russian).

Ershova, A.A., 2016. Chekhov in the assessment of Kazan criticism and literary criticism of the late XIX-early XX centuries: Author's abstract. dis. ... to. philol. sciences, Kazan, 19 (in Russian).

Moskovkin V.M., 2014. Belgorod Teachers' Institute: directors, teachers and graduates. Scientific Result. Social and humanitarian research, 2(2): 29-41(in Russian).

Orlova, O.M., 2005. The problem of autobiography in the creative evolution of Gaito Gazdanov: Dis C. of philol. sciences, Moscow, 258 (in Russian).

Paktovskij, F.E., 1900. Count A.K. Tolstoy and his poetic work: [To the 25th anniversary of the death of the poet], Kazan: Tipo-lit. Imp. Un-ta, 37 (in Russian).

Tolstoj, A.K., 1969. Coll. op. In 4 tons, M.: Pravda (in Russian).

Parsons, N.S., 1980. A hostage to art: The portraits of Boris Godunov by Pushkin and A.K. Tolstoy, Forum for Modern Language Studies, 16(3): 237-255.

Sheinberg, E., Ritzarev, M., 2010. The infinite Grace of Jesus': Massenet's 'Marie-Magdeleine' and Tchaikovsky's blessed tears, Music and Letters, 91(2): 171-197.

Szymańska, A., 2011. The figur of the Commander in 19th century Russian drama [Literaturoznawstwo], Slavia Orientalis, 60(3): 327-336.

